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W H E R E D R I V E R S H A D B E E N D R I N K I N G

14 MARCH, 1988

ALCOHOL/DRIVING COUNTERMEASURES, DEPARTMENT OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

NOVA SCOTIA

1987 - NOVA SCOTIA

Nova Scotia recorded 140 fatal motor vehicle collisions during 1987, claiming 161 lives. In 52 of the collisions, which claimed 61 lives, drivers had been drinking.

By comparison, there were 19 more fatal collisions in Nova Scotia during 1987 (+16%) than there were during 1986. However, fatal collisions where drivers had been drinking were down from 67 to the 52 (-22%) recorded the past year, a reduction of 15.

Traditionally, alcohol plays a part in at least 50% of the annual highway death tolls reported each year in our province, across Canada and throughout the U.S. Cross-Canada initiatives have resulted in a 40 - 43% average the past five years.

Nova Scotia compares well for 1987:

Fatal crashes alcohol - 37.1%
Fatalities alcohol - 37.8%

	YEAR TO YEAR		COMPARISON 1986/87	
	1986	1987	+/- #	+/- %
FATALITIES	134	161	27	20%
FATAL COLLISIONS	121	140	19	16%
FATALITIES ALCOHOL	76 56.7%	61 37.8%	-15	-20%
FATAL COLLISIONS ALCOHOL	67 55.3%	52 37.1%	-15	-22%

Of the 61 killed in Nova Scotia during 1987, 26 were drivers who had been drinking. Also killed were ten of their passengers, nine pedestrians, nine other drivers and seven of their passengers.

The victims, (passengers with drinking drivers, pedestrians, drivers and passengers in secondary vehicles), ranged in age from one year to 80.

Among the victims were a father, mother and two children; a one-year-old daughter and a 4-year-old son. The family was on vacation.

Eighteen of the vehicles operated by drivers who had been drinking (34%) were pre-1980 models. Thirty five (67%) were at least five years old. One motorcycle was involved, one trail bike; ten were either 4X4's, half-tons, or vans. The remaining vehicles were cars, primarily mid-size and smaller.

DRIVER INVOLVEMENT

Of the 52 collisions where drivers had been drinking, 51 were male. The lone female involvement was a single-vehicle, single-occupant crash.

Drivers 19 and under represented 9.4% of the fatal collision involvement, whereas they represent only 5.1% of the province's licensed driver population.

Drivers 20 - 29 were involved in 50% of the collisions, yet they represent only 25.2% of the licensed driver population.

The average age of driver involvement in the alcohol/fatal motor vehicle crashes in Nova Scotia during 1987 was 31.

DRIVER INVOLVEMENT BY AGE										
16-19	(UNDER) (21)	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	TOTAL	AVG. AGE	AVG. BAC
5	(7)	26	12	2	3	2	2	52	31	170
9.4%	(13.5)	50%	22.6%							

Breath and blood samples were obtained from 39 of the involved drivers. Breath and blood samples ranged from 30 mg. to 340 mg., more than four times the legal limit of 80 mg. Six drivers had readings under 80, ranging from 30 to 60 mg. Six drivers refused to provide either breath or blood samples after being involved in fatal collisions.

Four drivers had readings of 300 and higher; 12 were between 200 and 300.

The average reading from the 39 breath and blood samples obtained by police was 170, more than twice the legal limit.

Seven of the involved operators had been suspended from driving at the time of the collision; four had no valid license, one had a temporary permit.

ALCOHOL FATAL MOTOR VEHICLE

COLLISIONS BY MONTH, NOVA SCOTIA, 1987